ESS and C-3PTO: Three Reasons Your Organization Needs Employee Self Service for Paid Time Off

Why does your organization need ESS for PTO? The answer can be explained with just 3 reasons by our new favorite robot, C-3PTO. May the fourth be with you.

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Paid Time Off (PTO) season will be here before you know it. And hey, for some, it has already begun. I bet most of your employees are thrilled that the Hoth-like winter has finally ceased, and they can almost feel their toes nestling in the sands of Tatooine as they close their eyes. Or maybe that's just their feet falling asleep from sitting too long, which will only make them more eager to plan their next vacation anyway. But, hold on. Let's take a step back. What is your organization's policy and method for handling all these PTO requests you're about to receive? Well, of course it's best to encourage a young Jedi to ask his or her Jedi Master for PTO permission face to face initially, but we all know the boss gets busy. What if circumstances make this PTO request urgent, and the requestor's mentor is out of the office for a few days to meet with the Jedi Council? And how will this PTO be tracked? Please do not say manually with Excel sheets. An employee's PTO record needs to be on file, in the system, and automatically updated in real-time so when the day of relaxation comes, the cloud already knows that Skywalker is out (not just from the feel of his footsteps...get it?). How does this happen? Well, it's 2018 - there's an app for that on your iPhone or An **droid** , and it's called ESS.

What is ESS?

ESS stands for Employee Self-Service. No, I am not talking about Ess Al - I'm referring to the online portal your employees should be using to formally request their time off. This is the hyperspace setting your employees take *to* their time off, if you will. ESS is a bonus feature of your payroll and HCM system. As the Society for Human Resource Management puts it , ESS "consolidates information into one user-friendly gateway that creates efficiencies and helps quickly align employees with organizational objectives." In addition to requesting time off with customized messages, ESS allows employees to view things such as time off balances, pay stubs, tax information, team information, and overall pretty much all important bits of info regarding their employment. Why does your organization need ESS for PTO? The answer can be explained with just 3 reasons by our new favorite droid, *C-3PTO*.

1. **Portability.**

It's 2018. We're way past the Go-Gurt commercial days where 'on-the-go' was an exciting, new, and o ptional concept. No. Welcome to the age of instantaneity - where the concept of 'on-the-go' ha

s become almost Darwinian in necessity. 77% of Americans have smartphones , and they are on these devices for 3 hours each day. Employees should be able to communicate PTO requests with custom messages from anywhere at anytime, and managers should be able to respond to them from anywhere and at any time. And no, these messages are not holograms of themselves dramatically saying "...you're my only hope."

1. **Practicality**

Whether your organization's PTO policy is based on standard accrual or lump sum, unlimited, or mandated , tracking requests and balances is a tedious task. Tracking PTO manually without linking it to an HCM solution will divert productive HR time into unnecessary paperwork that pretty much begs for human error. Be practical. You need an easy-to-use ESS portal that is linked to your payroll/time and attendance solution, updates automatically, is secure, and provides a snapshot of vital employee information that is accessible to your employees and managers at all times. NOTE: We do not recommend storing employee information on your BB8 or R2D2. These droids travel all over the galaxy, carrying various important pieces of information like blueprints to constructions of the First Order... (they tend to attract a lot of trouble).

1. **Power : Brand Power, That Is**

Your organization is growing, and not only do you need to attract young Padawans to join the force, but you also need other businesses to take you seriously. You may be thinking to yourself, "where's he going with this? Why would potential hires or clients care about our internal processes such as how we track PTO?" The answer is that it all plays into your overall employer brand . According to Glassdoor , 95% of job seekers base their decision on an employer's reputation - which includes internal processes. So, you want the outside world to know that you are modernized, efficient, and adaptable to the processes of the new generation. Don't paint yourself as old school. Let your HR department focus on what matters instead of wasting time managing and updating excel formulas in hoarded excel documents. Plus, ESS empowers your employees. Don't be stuck in the Clone War days - provide your employees with the ability to view their data and retrieve their time off balances in real-time. May the fourth be with you... and may your ESS application be with you as well - after all, it should be on your smartphone!

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